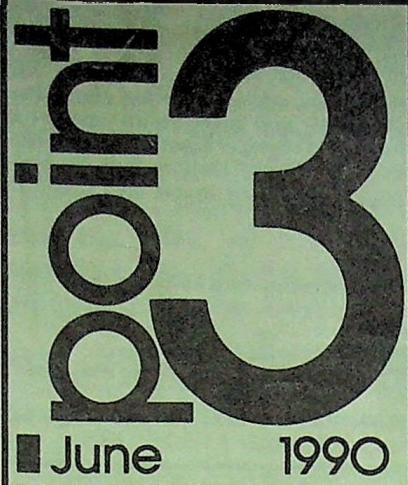


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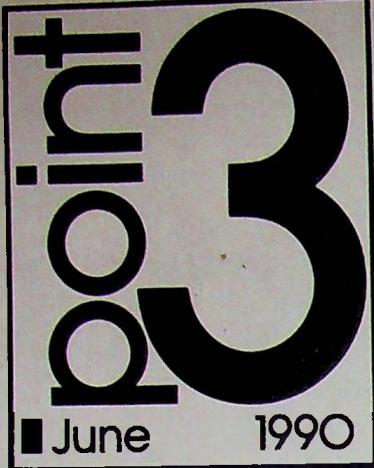
FRIENDSHIP CIRCLES

WEBB HOUSE



The magazine of
 **TOCH**

'Sharing
and Growing'



■ June

1990

The magazine of TOCH

Toc H is a movement of people who seek to build friendships, and offer service, across the barriers that usually divide us from one another. The basic unit is the group - at best a good cross-section of the local neighbourhood - which meets together regularly, and seeks to serve the community around it. Toc H was founded in 1915 by the Rev P. B. 'Tubby' Clayton, and since then has been providing opportunities for people to test the Christian way by practical experiment.

All members pledge themselves to try:

1. To welcome all in friendship and lessen by habit of thought, word and deed the prejudices which separate people.
2. To give personal service.
3. To find their own convictions while listening with respect to the views of others.
4. To acknowledge the spiritual nature of man and to test the Christian way by trying it.

This magazine is a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world as well as a record of Toc H service. Its title derives from the third of these Four Points.

You Can't Stop History

'One of the most dangerous types of member in any movement is the so-called "old faithful". So often he personifies arrested development and condemns every change of form, language or practice as a betrayal of our history. History is a moving chronicle of human affairs; it never stands still and no-one can stop it.' So wrote John Callf a quarter of a century ago in his 'restatement of basic Toc H', *Second Wind*. The words are worth re-calling at a time when Toc H is again going through a painful period of 'restatement'.

At the time John was writing, the young Toc H project method was flexing its muscles at Morden Bog and Bovey Tracey. Some 10 years later Toc H Friendship Circles were born in Cleveland. The moving chronicle that is Toc H history never stands still. Where will it lead us next? We must, to quote John Callf again, 'walk forwards, not backwards, into the future'.

As Chair of the Friendship Network I feel privileged to be involved in the unfolding history of Friendship Circles and to have been asked to write this editorial for an issue of *Point 3* in which the Toc H Friendship Network is so prominently featured. During the past 15 years we have seen Circles spreading out successfully from Cleveland to Darlington, Buckinghamshire, Birmingham and Bedfordshire and there are more in the pipeline! And then there has also been the development of that remarkable resource which is Webb House in Middlesbrough, where the World Chain of Light started last December. The Friendship Circle concept and philosophy, with its fundamental belief that we all need help and that all of us have something to offer, has become so much an accepted

part of Toc H that it has recently been recognised as one of the 'methods' which will receive priority consideration for resources as Toc H seeks to express its restated aims in extension and development in the 1990s.

Toc H Friendship Circles were born not only to bring acceptance and hope to those who had been mentally ill but also to challenge them with the needs of others and their ability to respond adequately to those needs. But 'history . . . never stands still and no-one can stop it'. I believe this development is poised to move on and to make new history. The concept and philosophy of Toc H Friendship Circles is so right that it merits a far wider application than to be targeted at a single grouping. Surely we could successfully develop it with all sorts and conditions of disadvantaged groupings in our society. What about those with HIV/Aids; those who are physically or mentally handicapped; those who are blind, deaf or hard of hearing; those who are homeless, unemployed or single parents? The groupings would seem to be legion and it is becoming clear to those of us who are active in the Friendship Network that our philosophy could be effectively applied to all these different groupings of people.

If this, in fact, is what our history has in store for the Toc H Friendship Network then, as John Callf said, 'no-one can stop it'. But we can help it on its way.

Robin Dunford

■ Robin Dunford chairs the Friendship Network and is a member of the Central Executive Committee. He joined Toc H in 1944.

Cover

Andy Pott (left), a member of Bucks Friendship Circles, at a 'Music Weekend' at Lindridge House, teaching the guitar to a resident of a Mencap home. A poem of Andy's appears in this issue.

Photo: Stephen Coldbreath
Asst. Warden, Cuddesdon House

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Letters, articles and news items are welcomed, and should be addressed to The Editor, *Point 3*, Toc H Headquarters, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Opinions expressed (including the editorial) are those of the individual

contributors and not necessarily those of the Toc H movement.

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Still Growing

Ann Crouch was working as the volunteer organiser at North Tees Hospital in Cleveland when she first met Toc H and the idea of Friendship Circles was born. It has grown beyond anything she imagined at the time.

When a consultant psychiatrist asked me to set up a support group for patients moving from hospital into the community I thought of it as a one-off activity for that hospital only. I had no idea how a simple request would grow into such a large undertaking. Nor had I any idea of the crucial role Toc H would eventually play in the development of Friendship Circles. Toc H was just one of the many voluntary organisations with which I came into contact.

Adrian Dudman, then Development Officer in the North East, was my link with Toc H and it was he who offered the movement's support. He and I, with some support from Toc H members, particularly Bill Barnes, and from hospital staff, began to work out the guidelines and patterns for the group we were about to establish. We opened in St Mark's Church Hall, Stockton, in November 1975. One of our early members suggested that we call ourselves 'the friendly circle', because that's what we were and that's how we worked, especially after lunch when we gathered in a circle to exchange news and views, sorrows and delights.

It didn't take us long to realise that one group wasn't enough. But to develop we needed a grant to employ someone to do the footwork. Neither Adrian Dudman nor I could find the time to start more circles. For two years nothing happened. It looked as if my first thoughts about the venture were correct. It would be a one-off activity limited to a small part of Cleveland.

Then we heard we'd got a grant, not just for Stockton but for the whole of Cleveland, enough money to employ a full-time Development Officer, plus expenses and the costs of setting up and running circles. We advertised the post twice and twice we didn't appoint. Time was moving rapidly, the first year of the grant was nearly over, and still we had no one in post. I was feeling very frustrated, so in 1980 I gave up my job and joined the staff of Toc H.

'a balance of young and old, men and women, fit and not so fit'

It seemed an easy task at first. We were working on principles of self-help, plus the Toc H mix and the Four Points of the Compass. Each circle was to be set up so that it had a balance of young and old, men and women, fit and not so fit. Every member undertook to play a part in running the group, helping to plan the day's activities, which included shopping for and preparing the midday meal.

It sounded easy but principles are notoriously hard to put into practice. The mix wasn't easy. Some people found contact with our members too much to take - there is a lot of anguish in many of their stories. Others came with their sleeves rolled up, ready to do all the work for these 'poorly' people and they didn't come



Photo: Tony Reade

Adrian Dudman with two of his friends at the very first Friendship Circle in Stockton.

back when they realised that what we wanted was friendship and encouragement, not having everything done for us. It was from Adrian Dudman that I had learned the importance of sitting with someone and giving them time, rather than hiding behind a task in the kitchen.

'activities which involved more than one group were important'

I had also learned that activities which involved more than one group, such as a holiday or a quiz, were important to our members. They could meet a larger number of people, have a wider range of activities, have more than one day a week with us. So I gave up at 10 circles and concentrated on building a web of inter-circle activities. We created a newsletter, had regular meetings of representatives from all the circles, went on holidays together, held craft fairs and other activities which brought us together from all over Cleveland.

By 1984 people outside Cleveland had heard about circles and thought them a good idea. Toc H received a grant to start circles in Buckinghamshire. At the same time Cleveland social services were asking what needs I'd identified among our members, and the first seeds for Webb House were sown (see page 4). The following year Central Council agreed that money should be set aside for the development of circles nationally, although each set of circles would continue to be funded by grants raised locally.

Raising money to establish circles is not easy, but so far Toc H has received money for circles in Cleveland, and for Webb House - there are still 10 groups, of which one is for people coming off tranquillisers. Grants have been received for Buckinghamshire, which has seven circles; Darlington, which is about to launch its third; Bedford, which has two. Birmingham is about to receive its first grant and we expect more circles there soon. There are active negotiations taking place in five other areas, some of which may reach fruition, others may die.

My initial conception was wrong. Far from being a one-off activity, the circle idea has grown and developed in a way that Adrian and I never visualised. It is still a growing organism and who knows what the next step will be.

■ **Ann Crouch** is the National Development Officer for Friendship Circles. Adrian Dudman is now Development Officer associated with Cuddesdon House.

All are Equal, All are Valued

Webb House grew out of a desire by Toc H to extend its existing work in the field of mental health. The project consists of two components: a residential part offering accommodation to seven people recovering from mental illness and three supporters from the local community; and a day resource with extensive facilities. All who use Webb House are welcomed as equals and valued for what they can contribute to the project as a whole.

Webb House stresses the 'well' part of a person. Each individual is encouraged to take responsibility for their own lives and to work towards the potential that we know each person possesses. Both the residential section and the day resource try to create an atmosphere where people feel that they belong and that they are an integral part of the house. Members are encouraged to initiate and participate in activities that will help them to regain lost skills and learn new ones, so helping their self-confidence to grow. Support and encouragement is given but people are also given time to develop at their own pace, and in the direction they choose. Skills include working in the coffee bar, office work, computer skills, woodwork and craft work.

Webb House is unique in the level of participation by its members in deciding how the house operates. Regular house meetings are held, which offer members

the chance to have a meaningful say, feed in ideas and exchange views. There is an active support group comprising Toc H members, Webb members, members of the local community and staff, which supports the house in its day-to-day activities and offers a forum for debate. Toc H branches offer a growing level of support; they are involved in group work and take part in a weekly social evening with the members. One exciting development is the opening of a new Toc H branch which will meet at Webb House. It calls itself the Station Branch, since the house is right opposite Middlesbrough Station.

With the introduction of 'care in the community' in 1991 we feel that Toc H Webb House will be able to meet a growing need in the local community. Our approach to mental health, that of empowering and enabling people, reflects both the ethos of Toc H and the central tenet of the Griffiths Report, on which the new policies are based. Webb House is well placed to play a role in Toc H's new focus of bringing people together and to act as a resource for Toc H, Webb members, Friendship Circles and people from the local community. We are confident that Webb House will continue to play an important role in the mental health field.

Judith Hodgson
Manager, Webb House



Viv Parry (left) in the Webb House kitchen.

I play a big part in Toc H Webb house, especially in the kitchen cooking the lunches and making sure that everything I do is perfect for the members and visitors to enjoy. I really enjoy doing this job, I get the chance to make new friends. I am a member of our support group and I try to play a big part in it. Webb House really means a lot to me, I have really gained more confidence by doing my job. One part I really enjoy is preparing the menus so the members can see what there is for lunch. The staff are great and understanding and very caring. What I would like to say to Toc H is that Webb House is perfect for me.

Viv Parry

I have been attending Webb House for two years now. When I first went there I was very depressed and withdrawn, I used to sit in the corner with my head down. I would have nothing to do with anyone. To my mind having friends meant being hurt again and I would not trust anyone. I found the staff were trying to draw me out but I was not going to be hurt again. It took some months before I started to talk to the staff; and one particular member of staff, every time I talked to him, just seemed to encourage me to do various jobs for him. He knew I lacked confidence in my abilities. Everything he tried to get me to do, I told him no way can I do that. Finally he persuaded me to help in the coffee bar. Now I see his reasoning: you cannot help in the coffee bar without meeting people and talking to them. This brought me out of myself and helped with my confidence.

As time went on I got more involved in Webb House, I started to use the computer. I started to do menus each day and this gave me even more confidence. With the help of one of the staff, I even started to do the menus in colour. I even found I was making friends with other members and I began to trust again. So with the help of the staff and members of Webb House I am getting well. Of course I still come up against problems but I know there is always a caring ear I can turn to. I have now started a job as a care assistant on ET but I know that should I have a problem I can always go to Webb House, my second home, and talk about it. Without the help of Webb House I do not know where I would be today.

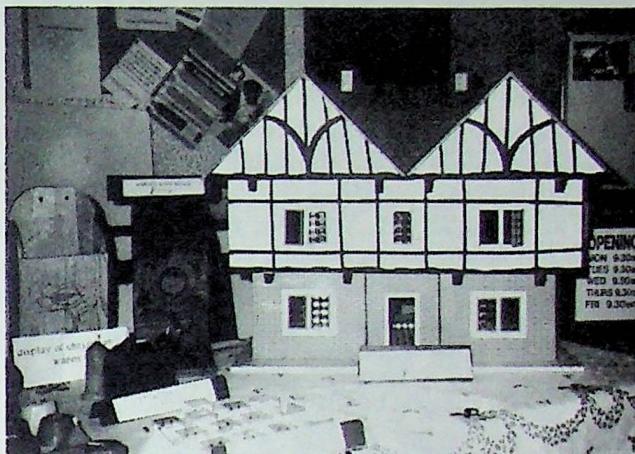
Right: The woodwork room is popular with many Webb House members.

Below right: Examples of some of the remarkable craft work done by Webb House members.



It has become a way of life because one finds all the talents God has given me and how to use them through working with people at Toc H centres, Friendship Circles and Webb House. Since retirement in 1979 I have become involved with Friendship Circles which cover a wide range of the needs of people both personal and otherwise. I am sure that the more one puts into any aspect of Toc H the more you receive from it. I looked forward to Webb House opening and since my wife died last June all the staff have been wonderfully supportive. I go to Webb House several days a week and like to be involved in any way I can. With the opening of a new Toc H branch at Webb House I hope to be even more involved in the future.

Ernie Levitt
Toc H member since 1962



I didn't know I could do woodwork.

*

If you have a problem with confidence Webb House is great, even if not it's great.

*

I wish I could come more often but I can't afford the fares.

*

I feel more confident talking to people.

*

You don't have to feel well and you're still welcome.

*

It's lifted me up.

*

Webb has given me the courage to do things. For instance I'm now doing posters and printing an anthology of my own writing.

*

Once I'm here I love it. I hate getting the bus to come and then I don't want to go home.



Brian Willis looks after the Webb House stall at a local exhibition.

Friendship Circles, says Jane Richardson, draw together the same wide mixture of people that characterised Talbot House, Poperinge, when Toc H began in World War I; and they offer the same experience of welcome and acceptance. They give us some important clues about how Toc H should develop in the 1990s.



'To conquer hate would be to end the strife of all the ages but for men to know one another is not difficult and it is half the battle.' *Barclay Baron*

A Rich Mixture

I recently concluded my work for Toc H as a Development Officer with the Friendship Circles in Buckinghamshire. While seeking other employment I have had plenty of opportunity to reflect on my involvement with Circles, the community-based, self-help groups which offer support to people recovering from mental illness or emotional distress.

Toc H has been something of a pioneer in this field. Within the Circles, and within Webb House, despite the regional variations reflecting local conditions, members meet in a unique way. They are neither patients nor clients but fellow-cooks, leaders, organisers, supporters and friends. The person, not the pathology, is the most important thing. We don't ask what's wrong with any new member, we ask rather 'what can you do?' And a great many skills are often hidden under layers of dependence, lost confidence and lost opportunity. We don't define what is helpful to those in emotional distress; we simply provide a welcoming, homely environment for meeting together, a community in which opportunities are fostered and self-confidence may grow.

But for me one of the most striking features of the Circles is the rich mixture of people. There are nursing sisters, housewives, teachers, manual workers, mums, children, young and old, Caribbean, Irish and Polish, people who have travelled the world and people whose world has been restricted to the village where they were born.

This is in sharp contrast with the pattern in many other areas of Toc H life. All too often we fail to provide the environment in which to foster the vision of a Toc H where 'men might know one another'. Branches are often accused, with positive exceptions, of being meeting places for a group of old friends, sometimes of one sex, many of whom have enjoyed the same fellowship for several years. Members very sincerely suggest that they try to attract others, little realising how closed and inappropriate their community may seem. Likewise projects are very often accused of attracting a mostly younger age group, composed of white, middle-class students. Why then, when Toc H is struggling to achieve mixture, should the experience of the Circles be so different?

*'a common experience
transcends normal divisions'*

I believe the explanation lies in the experience of a common trauma, that of illness, which transcends the social and racial divisions which normally exist and reduces them to trivia. Such a shared experience fosters a deep fellowship and a loving acceptance of one another, a mutual sympathy which surpasses all other differences.

It was another such shared traumatic experience, and the loving fellowship it created, which inspired the founders of Toc H to attempt to retain that spirit in the post-war years. Men had gathered together from all



Photos: David Owen

The Channel was flat as a millpond the day the Friendship Circle party crossed to Belgium. ▲



Enjoying the beach at de Panne during the Friendship Circle holiday in Belgium. ▶

walks of life. It was an unlikely gathering and it was an enforced one, a meeting of men whose only reason for coming together was to engage in a defensive war.

Talbot House undoubtedly provided a radically open club in which huge varieties of meetings took place and unlikely friendships resulted. Men voluntarily walked across the threshold to explore the welcome on the other side, but initially they were seeking a refuge. And Talbot House captured, focused and expressed in a concrete setting the fellowship of the trenches.

The Circles, likewise, are to an extent enforced meeting places. Like Talbot House no one is coerced to enter, but the reason many do so concerns the personal battles which they are fighting against their own emotional distress. Many members have known times when their lives have been fragmented by these experiences. Some have lost jobs, families or partners as a result and they come together to seek comfort and support.

'the parallels with Talbot House are numerous'

However, like those survivors of the war who longed to share the intimacy they had known with those back home, many members who grow stronger through their meeting with others go on to do invaluable work in helping to initiate new Circles, or working hard to promote the circle project in all its aspects. Indeed the whole project would, quite deliberately, fail without them.

The parallels with Talbot House are numerous. The Circles, too, are fun places to be, despite the personal sadnesses which afflict people's lives. In fact one Circle, at a recent review, complained that there was rather too much fun! Most can laugh and lose themselves in the company of friends.

And the residential aspect of Circle life is crucial. Holidays, inter-Circle weekends and project involvement are ever-popular features of Circle life. Many a relationship has been cemented by the sharing of anything from tea and toothpaste to a midnight conversation. Pyjamas, it seems, are also great social levellers!

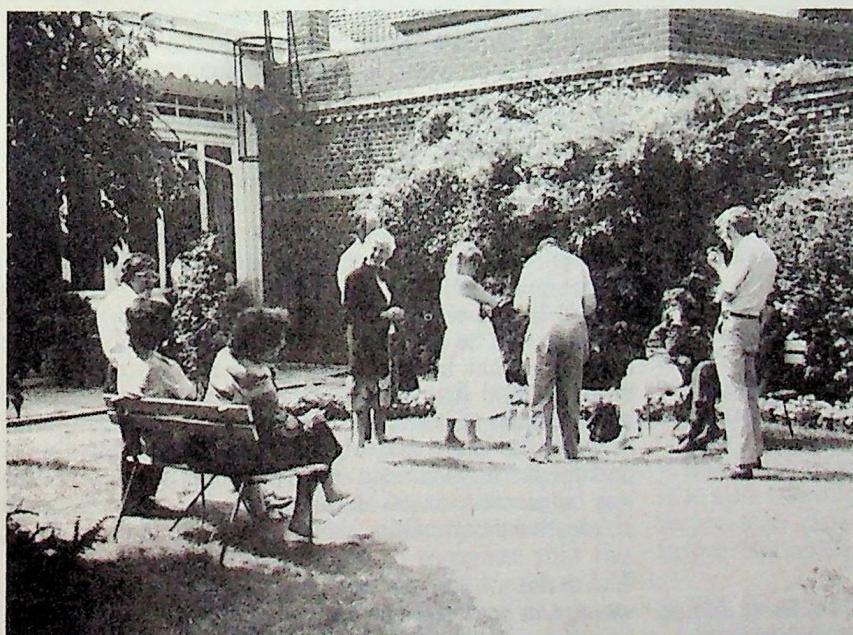
So what are the implications of the Circle experience for Toc H in the 1990s and beyond? One obvious implication is that if we want to achieve a wide meeting of people, and if this rich mixture is often found where there is a shared trauma, there are many other groupings with whom we could become involved. Victims of AIDS and the bereaved are two obvious possibilities.

A further implication must be that meetings of people from many walks of life are unlikely to occur spontaneously unless prompted by some over-riding need. We normally seek out like-minded associates and friends and remain in ignorance of many others within our communities. Toc H must therefore consciously attempt to create that mixture in its branch and project life, and to use a task or activity as a vehicle for achieving it, not as an end in itself. This indeed is already true of many excellent projects where the task serves the purpose of bringing together an unlikely gathering and offers an opportunity to explore ourselves in relation to others. It is not enough to have a philosophy which welcomes all in friendship; we have to make that a reality.

All this is obviously time-consuming and so may need to be at the expense of other Toc H projects and activities which focus more on the task, on what is achieved rather than how, or by how diverse a grouping of people.

This year we celebrate the anniversary of Toc H and 45 years of peace in Europe but I feel our society is more in need of a place where 'men might know one another' than ever before. Peace and politics have diluted the recognition of men's need of one another and life today is often insular and complacent. But that complacency is most conspicuously absent in Friendship Circles, among members for whom an inner peace is often so elusive. There you will find a loving acceptance, a welcoming of all in real friendship, the laughter and warmth which has made Circle members such a joy and a privilege to know.

■ **Jane Richardson** left the Toc H staff in January. She is now a social worker in Sussex and a member of the Toc H Central Executive Committee.



Jane Richardson, with her mother beside her, enjoying the Belgian sunshine. ▲

◀ Friendship Circle members in the garden of Talbot House, Poperinge.

many churches one body

In the second article in our new series which looks at the different Christian denominations, James Weatherhead writes about

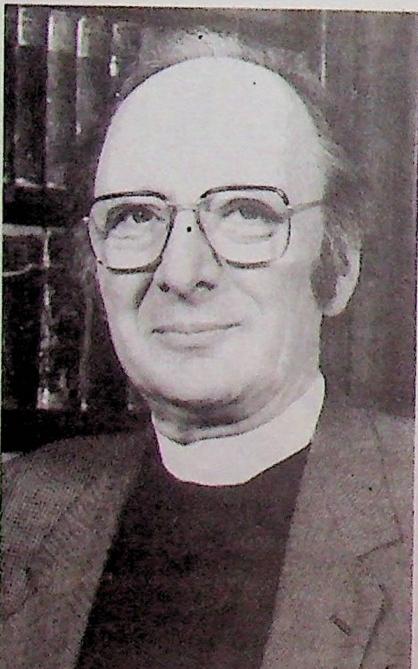
The Church of Scotland

There must be few people in Britain who have not seen a television picture of the Prime Minister addressing the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The occasion has become a highlight of contemporary history, and no doubt it will recede in time into the perspective of the whole history of church and state, religion and politics, apart from which it is difficult to appreciate the true ethos of the Church of Scotland.

It is because of history that members of this church will give their religion as Church of Scotland rather than presbyterian - seeing their church as national rather than denominational. Although democracy and presbyterianism are not at all the same thing, their roots are so intertwined in past conflicts that it is impossible to say whether the character of the people has shaped the church or the shape of the church has moulded the character of the people.

"I vow to thee, my country" has never been included in a Church of Scotland hymn-book'

For example, it was the attempts of the Stuart kings to establish political control of the church through the royal appointment of bishops which provoked hostility to episcopacy; and it was the persistent application of the theological doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings to the point of despotism which led to the popular reaction in favour of constitutional monarchy and democracy.



The Revd James Weatherhead.

Rightly or wrongly, you cannot have church history without political history, or vice versa; and when, after centuries of conflict, the state, by the Church of Scotland Act, 1921, recognised this church as a national church entirely free from state control, that was certainly not the time for the church to withdraw from the public scene into the realm of personal devotion and private morality.

It should not therefore come as a surprise that the hymn, 'I vow to thee, my country', has never been included in a Church of Scotland hymn-book; because this hymn, entitled 'The Two Fatherlands', is about the service of our love being devoted to our country - national service - contrasted with 'another country' which we enter 'soul by soul' - personal religion. It is the alternative national anthem for those who want to keep religion out of politics, but it was surely an error of judgement for Mrs Thatcher to seek to clinch her argument to the General Assembly by quoting this hymn.

'the concept of a national church is not a narrowly nationalistic one'

Of course the church is not a political institution. It is a Christian institution. As the body of Christ, it is a divine institution, more than the sum of its individual members; and as such it has a responsibility in and for society, which is also more than the sum of its individual members. Because there is no aspect of social life about which it may be said that God does not care, the politicians of this world cannot claim immunity from Christian criticism any more than other people can. This is a lesson which is plainly written on the pages of Scottish history; and the Church of Scotland, as a British Church, bears witness that attempts to control or silence or discredit the church are symptoms of dictatorship.

Thus, when the response to any genuinely Christian expression of concern about some aspect of government policy is met by the accusation that the church is 'left-wing', the concern of the dispassionate observer will be not just that the accuser is gratuitously assigning what he conceives to be the worst possible motives, not just that the accuser is so politically programmed that left and right are the only categories in which he can think, but that the person who thinks and speaks in such ways is hardly qualified to vote, far less be elected, unless democracy is indeed to become an elective dictatorship.

The point of all this is that a national church bears witness in national life to the fact that our rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's is subject to



The emblem of the Church of Scotland, the Burning Bush - 'And lo, it was not consumed', Exodus 3:2.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in session. In the gallery, to the right, sits the Lord High Commissioner, the Queen's representative, and his guests.



the prevailing duty to render to God the things which are God's, and therefore the sovereignty of the state is not to be regarded as absolute.

It will therefore be clear that the concept of a national church is not a narrowly nationalistic one. Indeed it is valid only when the church concerned is, as the Church of Scotland declares itself to be, 'part of the Holy Catholic or Universal Church'. The fundamentals for which it stands are not just for one nation, but for all; not just for one generation, but for all time. That is why history is important, and that is why it is important to understand that the Reformation was not a time of forming new churches, but of re-forming the church, and of claiming historical continuity as well as being open to continual reformation.

So the Church of Scotland is a full member of the Scottish Churches' Council, the British Council of Churches, the Council of European Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and the World Council of Churches; and is committed to membership of the new ecumenical bodies for Scotland, and for Britain and Ireland, which are in the process of being formed. National status is no impediment to catholicity, and catholicity implies ecumenism.

One of the features of a national church is that it is a 'broad' church - there is room within its membership for a wide variety of theological views. Fundamental doctrines are recognised, but 'with due regard to liberty of opinion in points which do not enter into the substance of the faith'. This ecclesiastical breadth enables the Church of Scotland to recognise that the fundamental things we have in common with other churches are far more important than the things on which we differ.

While the presbyterian system of church government, with its church courts composed of ordained ministers and elders, presided over by moderators who are 'first among equals' with no executive powers, and without any bishops, is held to be 'in agreement with the Word of God', few would now claim that it is the *only* system prescribed by scripture. Accordingly, the 'orders' of other churches are recognised, and their members welcome to share in sacramental and other worship.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the difficulties in the way of fuller unity lie in the more exclusive doctrines of apostolic succession, the three-fold ministry, and episcopal confirmation. Yet it would be as difficult for the Church of Scotland to accept these as essential to unity as it would be for others to concede that they are not essential. Reconciliation without compromise is the aim, towards which closer co-operation and deeper understanding are hopeful steps currently being taken.

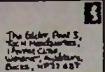
All the while, worship is being offered in the 1700 congregations throughout Scotland - in a variety of forms, for there is no fixed liturgy. Ministers and elders are caring pastorally for people. Courts and committees are supervising and carrying out works of mission and service, locally, nationally, and internationally. God is being glorified, Christ is being preached, the Holy Spirit is at work.

It is true that statistics show that membership is falling. It is also true that financial problems are growing. No responsible person could be complacent about the future. But no Christian person can be a pessimist.

■ *The Revd James Weatherhead is the Principal Clerk to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.*

your letters

We reserve the right to edit letters.
Only letters with full name and address
will be considered for publication.



interested in conforming to the world's standards. That is why it is losing its power. The same thing has been happening to Toc H. It is only when one stands up uniquely, honestly and forthrightly for its exclusive right to be God's chosen people that the Christian Church will have the impact that is needed by today's society. I am a Christian and a Toc H member and find them both quite compatible.

Tony Caldwell
Herford, Germany

EXCLUSIVITY

I disagree strongly with the sentiments expressed in the letter from Peter Goozee (*Point 3*, March) under this title. Christianity is exclusive. It is based on a personal experience of the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. One can only become a Christian by the Holy Spirit enlightening our minds to our lost condition and enabling us to believe that Jesus Christ is God himself and, at one and the same time, exclusively the Son of God able to redeem us from our sins. That is the exclusive uniqueness of the Christian faith.

To say that the Christian Church has little real value or significance to society at large shows a lamentable lack of understanding. The Christian Church is alive and well and has millions of followers today. The problem that Peter should address himself to is that the established church today is far too

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

I am interested that the Revd Colin Gibbs (*Point 3*, March, Letters) regards Jehovah's Witnesses as 'a minor and heretical sect' and that he feels the need to convert them. I have been associated with this group for 27 years. I can assure Colin Gibbs that they are not minor, with over 3 1/2 million ministers preaching the Gospel in 212 countries. I find it offensive that they should be called heretical as it is the mainline churches that have the problems today, with doctrines of pagan origin and terrible moral problems to sort out. Recently, the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses have been sending tons of aid to Poland. When there are natural disasters Jehovah's Witnesses are nearly always first on the scene with aid, and not just for their own members.

I would ask you please to publish this letter as I would like to commend all Toc H members for the work they do at their own cost for others, without blowing their own trumpets. I have two very good friends who have been active Toc H members for many years and, although of different opinions, we respect one another. I suggest Colin Gibbs should not concern himself with Jehovah's Witnesses, but rather consider the sign in Talbot House, Poperinge - 'Abandon rank all ye who enter here'.

I J Howat
Hemel Hempstead, Herts

CARING FOR CARERS

I was very interested and encouraged to read, in the April issue of *Point 3*, about Weymouth and Weston Branches' initiative in inviting Carers to a Christmas party, and then hoping to follow up this event with others.

My mother has Alzheimer's disease and my father, my family and I cared for her in our home until last Christmas when she became physically unmanageable. By that time she could not speak or communicate in any way, was doubly incontinent and showed no response to any stimulation at all. She had to be escorted round the house, raised and lowered in and out of chairs, and sometimes even

book review

Accepting Herself

AN ASPECT OF FEAR
by Grace Sheppard
Darton Longman & Todd, £5.95

If we see people on television or read about them in the newspaper as a result of their success in some area it is easy to imagine that they must be successful in every corner of their lives. We might not take such a one-dimensional view of film stars or politicians perhaps, because we have heard about the stresses and strains of their lifestyles. But a hard-working Christian person, the wife of a bishop, and well-known for her own work, is not the sort of person we would expect to find struggling to cope.

Grace Sheppard, at the age of 22, newly married to the energetic and

handsome cricketing clergyman, David Sheppard, now Bishop of Liverpool, suffered an emotional breakdown. Her book quietly and slowly recounts her development from that point, 30 years ago, to the present day. Although her illness manifested itself in the form of a physical reaction to one fear she was prey to all the other fears which beset every one of us, at one time or another and to a greater or lesser extent. In searching for help for her own problem she has listened to other people's problems and has come to understand how to lessen the consequences of fear and to increase one's confidence.

Grace Sheppard found herself disabled by her feelings. A woman who makes casual references, on the one hand to providing lunch for 11 guests, laying the lino, tackling London's traffic with little driving experience and boxing-in the bath, and on the other hand to doing Radio 4's 'Thought for the Day', sounds like someone to be envied.

Inside, and known only to those nearest to her, she was fighting to live up to a role which she had created for herself, a fantasy evolved from her presumption of other people's expectations. She began by being proud of her efforts to be independent and self-sufficient. In the end she rejoices in her realization that this is not at all how we are meant to be. We need to feel accepted but we do not win acceptance until we ask for it. Learning to ask for it is the key. Looking back at her earlier self Grace Sheppard uses words such as dignity, pride, respect, reputation. (Her journey is not yet over: at the end of the book she is still using the word humanity to mean human weakness.) Her aim, from before the onset of her illness, but expressed more consciously after that point, was wholeness and integration. Destructive fears, whether of spiders, of traffic lights, of wearing the wrong clothes, or of marriage breakdown, work against the achievement of this aim.

helped to feed herself. The strain on all of us was enormous, never-ending, and we knew that whatever happened, mother would only regress further. She had been a loving, bright and active member of society only seven years ago. What a difference!

We all shared the stress and strain as best we could, although, of course, father bore the brunt of it, especially as he liked to look after mother himself as much as possible. How elderly spouses on their own, or single daughters or sons manage to keep going is completely beyond me.

In these days of deteriorating social services there is a desperate need for help for Carers. Toc H groups and branches could play a very important role in befriending them in their own homes. Ideally popping in for an hour or so fairly frequently, to build up friendships, would lead to the Carer feeling less isolated. It would also mean that they had someone rational to talk to, at least for a little while. We were lucky because mother was able to attend day centres while living at home, so we had some breaks. In other areas of the country, though, there are few day centres and Carers have to cope 24 hours a day, day in, day out.

I have written about Alzheimer's disease because I have experience of it, but Carers for people suffering

from other neurodegenerative diseases are equally stressed because, as in Alzheimer's disease, the personalities of their loved ones disintegrate. If you are alone with this kind of problem just having someone to talk to would make such a difference. The need of the Carers is desperate. Can Toc H help to meet it?

Margaret Thomas
Chalfont St Peter, Bucks

If you, or anyone you know, is caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease, the Alzheimer's Disease Society could help you. Their address is: 158/160 Balham High Road, London SW12 9BN.

BARRIER

Some young volunteers are making a barrier of the Christian basis of Toc H. It is admirable that, faced with this, they discuss and search consciences. However, in taking part in a project they have already taken a step on the Toc H path. We invite them to continue on that way. No one is asking them to enter into an intensive religious study course; but taking away the Christian basis of Toc H in order to increase membership would be a denial of its origins. I feel that it would be better to let Toc H die. If the Spirit wills, something will arise from the ashes.

Betty Martin
Poole, Dorset

Great War Veterans

Ruth Boyd would like to hear from veterans of the Great War, particularly from members who remember Talbot House in those pioneer days. Interviews would appear in *Point 3* during this important 75th Anniversary year. Contact her at:

Toc H Headquarters,
1 Forest Close, Wendover,
Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT

A VARIETY OF VENTURES

I would like to say that it is North Walsham Branch to whom Jersey, CI, send their old 'specs' (*Point 3*, February). They have done this for many years now, and many hundreds have arrived and have been distributed to India, Bangladesh or several African countries. Some of the last lot should shortly end up in Tonga, South Seas.

Pete Pashley
North Walsham, Norfolk

Fears are healthy in that they provide the body with a natural defensive alarm system. What should happen is that the alarm is listened to, acknowledged, and switched off, so that the cause can be identified. If this sequence is broken and we try to ignore the alarm it will stay switched on and prevent us from doing anything else, including looking at the cause. There are many causes for our behaviour, and they can be rooted in our earliest experiences. It is characteristic of Grace Sheppard's sensible and intelligent attitude and her desire to help others help themselves that she does not use psychological terms or theory, nor does she attempt to explore too far below the surface. She is more interested in observing behaviour and she suggests that changing our behaviour changes how we feel. She does look at some of the experiences which have had an effect on her, such as childhood separations and loss in wartime. Another interesting influence on

her behaviour was her earlier perception of Christianity. This caused her to seek self-denial and stopped her listening to herself. A view of a judgemental God, propped up by the well-intentioned but sometimes gossipy fellowship of her Christian friends, provided an oppressive atmosphere for someone whose expectations of herself were unreal to begin with.

Grace Sheppard is a remarkable woman to have suffered so bravely and to have been so unselfish about helping others. The most unselfish thing she has done may well have been the writing of this book. No one who has suffered unreasonably from any aspect of fear could read it without obtaining practical help, and more importantly, gaining courage to go on and to take risks. She is a woman one would like to be with, not least for her sense of humour: on her first visit to Liverpool Cathedral following her husband's appointment, an obvious time of stress, she was able to tease

herself about the irony of someone suffering from her condition ending up in this particular cathedral with its vast open spaces. Her condition? The fear of open spaces: agoraphobia.

Julia Lane

■ Julia Lane and her husband are employed by the National Trust and are responsible for Upton House, near Banbury. She served for a time on the Toc H Central Executive Committee.

New Guidebook

An extremely attractive souvenir Guidebook to Talbot House. Full colour illustrations. The story of the House and its role today.

Price: £2.00 (includes p&p)

Order from:

Toc H Publications,
1 Forest Close, Wendover,
Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT

We Don't Label People

Ruth Boyd, who will take over as Editor of *Point 3* shortly, visited the Bucks Friendship Circles office in Princes Risborough in her first week with Toc H, to talk with Jill Wingrove, recently promoted to Development Officer, and her new colleague, Nusia Cooper.

Jill joined the Bucks Friendship Circles in January 1987, when there were four in existence. She has recently set up the sixth, in Aylesbury, and is working hard to get its existence more widely known. There is an additional circle which was set up by the members themselves and which is self-supporting - funded by members' own donations, and from organising activities like jumble sales. The others are funded by Bucks County Council and their office is in one of the authority's Day Centres.

Jill and Nusia are helped by David Owen - not the politician, but someone equally known in Toc H circles for his lively personality and as the retired Headquarters Administrator. His work with the Aylesbury Circle on Wednesdays, as a very active member, releases time for Jill and Nusia to get on with administrative work.

Ruth: How does the Toc H ethos work in relation to the Friendship Circles?

Jill: I feel very much part of Toc H and of the ethos behind it. It's my ethos; it's what I actually came in with myself. And Toc H have done so many good things. But the problem is that the public, if they have heard about them at all, tend to think of Toc H in terms of boy scout type of activity and carnival floats.

In relation to the Friendship Circles, you are mixing people up who might only have illness in common, mixing people up, helping and being helped, and enabling

friendship to develop among people who would not ordinarily meet. Our main anxiety is to get over the pejorative label.

Nusia: One of the really good things about Toc H is that it is so open to suggestions and ideas. It was what appealed to me in preference to other jobs I had applied for at the same time. It gave me the feeling that you could develop the job in so many different ways.

Jill: But, then it's down to you to develop it yourself; you don't get a lot of help. There's a positive and a negative about that; it's so much down to you; in some ways that's great, in some ways that is very difficult to do.

Ruth: Do you describe David Owen as a member or as a volunteer?

Jill: We don't actually distinguish between the two anyway, which is one of the main Toc H ideas. In other words, volunteers don't come in to take over; it is very much about encouraging people to help themselves - very much self-help; a question of sitting back and encouraging people to do things for themselves and not actually taking a leading role.

Nusia: It would be wonderful having people who were just suffering from loneliness; who felt they could come along and be part of the group - having a day out and being with a group of people.

Jill: Yes, but this raises a problem. It is the *label* of mental ill health. As soon as you say mentally ill, or

rounds



Photo: Ruth Boyd
David Owen (left) with a Friendship Circle member.

mental ill health, it's a question of people running in the opposite direction because they're so scared, they don't understand. Again, it's a question of understanding; people haven't been educated about mental ill health, they are frightened of it. The whole idea of people going back into the community after mental illness - or suffering from mental illness - must, I believe, be part of a general policy of educating the general public about people who are mentally ill.

Because they have this idea of these insane, mad, people walking around; and they're not. They're ordinary people like you or I who happen to suffer from time to time from some sort of mental illness.

Nusia: Yes, and also it happens to people at all levels of intelligence and social grouping. One of the biggest things I come across when I'm talking to people is the prejudice that it is a particular group of people who become mentally ill - that it is only poorer people, who haven't had the advantage of education.

Ruth: How many members are schizophrenic?

Jill: We don't deal with it like that. We don't ask people what their specific illness or problem is. We



Photo: Ruth Boyd
Nusia Cooper (left) and Jill Wingrove of Bucks Friendship Circles.

A Break at Butlin's

by David Owen

The minibus is a friendly vehicle - 12 of you packed into it, with all your luggage, a spare bed and boxes of food, and you are all nice and cosy. The sun is shining, the birds are singing, the spring flowers are blooming, there's excitement in the air. The Bucks Friendship Circles are off to Butlin's for a holiday. Whoopee!

The journey was smooth, the countryside beautiful, the reception warm and the accommodation just right. What does one do on a holiday at Butlin's? Well, there was Des O'Connor (we enjoyed that - including some of the jokes!), discos, bands, competitions, swimming (ever been down a flume? We have, though not all

went down the 'black hole' - who said chicken?), roller skating, square dancing, shopping in Minehead, a visit to Selworthy and, in a little thatched cottage, morning coffee out of delicate porcelain cups (and only 50p - 85p on the motorway!), accompanied by a large, oozy creamy chocolate gateau for the driver - and he deserved it. We walked up Dunkery Beacon to the very top of Exmoor: oh what a beautiful view and what a lovely day. Then there was snooker, first time for some, and a darts competition (ladies v gents - very sexist), and scrabble at midnight.

Sadly, Monday came, the last day, and it rained for the first time. Back on the bus, our last call at pretty Dunster, and then we were on our way home, still friendly, very happy but perhaps a touch sad. Oh, by the way, who did the cooking? We all did. Who did the washing-up? We all did. Who arranged it all? Hilda and Jill. Who did all the driving? Terry. Special thanks to them. It was a smashing holiday.

Photo: David Owen



Even in March it was warm enough for a walk along the beach when Friendship Circle members went to Somerset.

don't label people. We find out, eventually, by talking to them; they are quite happy to talk about their illness. The idea is that you go into a Circle and accept people as they are; you don't go in with a label about your illness or your history.

Ruth: How do people find out about the Friendship Circles?

Jill: Through their friends, or through referral by the social services; from social workers, from rehabilitation centres, community psychiatric nurses.

What we would ideally like is for people just to come along because they want to. Maybe because they are lonely and need company.

Nusia: I always think that must be the hardest thing. Just to walk into an established group.

Ruth: How does your average week pan out?

Jill: We meet together on Wednesday morning to discuss what has been going on and what is projected for the rest of the week. We spend some time in each Circle each week. They meet from around 10.30 to 3.30pm. The main part of the meeting is discussing the meal, what people would like; then collecting the money, getting the

food and then cooking it. So, when choosing a venue, the cooking facilities are very important and also the location - it is never sited near social services, to avoid any sense of connection.

The very process of being involved in the meal reinforces the sense of being in the group. Each circle decides how much they will spend. It breaks up the day, is something to talk about, something to look forward to and involves conversation. Members are not restricted to one circle - they can go to several.

A lot of what we do in the groups is actually just listening. While not specifically taking on board people's problems you invariably listen to them.

Some of our help is for people who are in a stage in between hospital and going back to work. Part of the job is to encourage them to build up relationships outside the circles - meeting up outside. Parties, going to the cinema, walks. A lot of their life is taking part outside the circles.

Ruth: You both seem very well-motivated.

Jill: It is the nature of the job.

points <<<<<

Members of Bramley, Leeds, Branch helped to celebrate the 80th birthday of Tom Harrison, who has been a member of Toc H for 54 years. Tom is still very active in the work of the branch and is also a regular helper at St George's Crypt centre for homeless people. In his 'spare time' he keeps bees and looks after his allotment.

The Revd Harold Lovell, who lives in Hatfield, Herts, celebrated his 100th birthday in February. Harold was ordained in Jamaica and served as a chaplain in the First World War, when he came to know Talbot House in Poperinge. After the war he started the first Toc H branch in Jamaica. The S E & W Herts District arranged a birthday party for Harold. Alan Johnson, the National Chaplain, proposed his health and he responded entertainingly. The evening came to a fitting end when, slowly and very movingly, he took Light, using the Franciscan words.

Congratulations to three year old Daniel Aifama, a member of the Toc H Jersey Playschool, who has been named 'toddler of the year' by the Jersey Pre-School Playgroups Association.

Continued overleaf 13

■ Continued from previous page

Photo: Trinity Newspapers



During the last few years, members of Southport, Lancs, Branch have been knitting strips which have been made into blankets either for a bed or over people's knees. These have been distributed to elderly people in the Southport and Formby district. Ten of these blankets were presented to the local holiday home of the Winged Fellowship which was officially opened by the Prince of Wales last year.

POEM

And as they turn the right key, who's locked out by those locked in?
For the prisoners of conscience, in the silent house of mind,
We drank tea in the afternoon, dead tradition for our sin,
With no real way of knowing, no measure of cruel or kind.

And in the darkness and the mystery,
 born of some half lived perception,
The sound of laboured breathing, came slowly to my ears,
As if in Hell's all pervading misery, and blinding desolation,
An answer lay in Evil's keeping, to give substance to the fears.

A dereliction of duty took my hand in its clasp,
 with a grip as from a vice,
Holding as fast and as unyielding, as the cold reflection of the moon,
And I dreamt the dreams matching first to last,
 walking barefoot through cold snow and ice,
As a *wiseacre* unbelieving, yet knowing day would follow soon.

We are the fated, my kindred and I, the seed on stony ground.
And cold light washes shadows, laundered clean of any stain,
Fighting wars as though blind,
 we see yet, dark *bones* buried underground,
But what price would you pay?
 And at what cost to yourself? To be rid of the insane.

You ask is war worth winning? Is it worthy of the cost?
 And will victory rise like a phoenix from the flames?
Will there be light and hope and beauty,
 glad songs to soothe and calm, as they did in bygone days?
Yes my friend, though you've loved and lost,
 felt both the pleasure and the pain,
You'll see time is the healer, be true to its will,
 live for tomorrow, and live for today.

Andy Pott
Member of High Wycombe Circle

new members

The following new members were registered during March/April:

Daniel L Raynor (Anstey M)
Stephen J Hodgson (Central)
Mrs Hilda Sargent (Leicester W)
Mrs Helen M Solly (Margate W)
James Stroyde (Netherton M)
Jack Dimmer (North Walsham J)
Mrs Brenda P Van Ruiten
(Oatlands J)
Mrs Gwendoline Frost
(Plympton W)
Ronald E Tarr (Troon M)
Miss Sabine Claeys, Miss Isabel Logie, Miss Kathy Orbie, Miss Tina Wyffels
(Tubby's Poperinge Grp)
John Tamsett
(Wigmore & Rainham M)
Mrs Lilian Jaques, Geoffrey & Mrs Margaret W White (Wolds District)

Welcome to 17 new members

obituaries

We regret to announce the death of the following members:

In November
John E Barr (Broughty Ferry)
Cyril Marritt (Barton-on-Humber)

In December
Harold Westby (Nottingham City)

In February
Ernest A Bowles
(South East Kent District)
Elsie C May (Southdown District)

In March
Sidney Arnold (Huddersfield)
George W. T. Brown (New Milton)
Olive G Eaton (Taunton)
Frances McCutcheon (Hunstanton)
Gladys Matchwick
(Loddon Vale District)
Percy Page (North London District)
Frederick G Pendrey (Broadway)
Alexander M R Turner
(Tayforth District)
George Williams (Jedburgh)
E A 'Edie' Wilson (Margate)

In April
Ada E Marshall (Rawmarsh)
Francis D Mason (Corby)
Joe Motlow (Cheltenham)
Douglas D Rhodes (Selkirk)

Not previously recorded
Phyllis M Bean
(Stony Stratford & Wolverton)
Thomas H Easton (Selkirk)

9 date

farewell

We came from far and wide, the Midlands, Devon, Bedford, to say thank you to Jane Richardson as she bade farewell to her beloved Friendship Circles, especially the seven Circles in Bucks which she founded and nursed over their early years. Now, she and we had to say farewell as she took on the new adventure of married life with Robert. There were several speeches, formal and informal, and all spoke with love and appreciation for Jane and the happy and charming way she led us into new paths of friendship and companionship.

DWO

Eve Dunlop (Kirkley)
 Walter Henderson (Selkirk)
 Alfred H G Littlewood (St Austell)
 Ruth Thomas (Oldham)

Bessie Clark, who died in December, was a founder member of King's Norton, Birmingham, Branch and was Pilot for many years. Florrie Powell, who died in February aged 96, joined the branch in the 1930s. She saw service in France in 1917-18 and joined the Civil Nursing Reserve in the Second World War. She assisted a blind husband and wife, over many years, with the Braille correspondence courses which they ran.

JD

The Revd L G ('Appy) Appleton died in January at his daughter's home in Australia. He was on the staff of Toc H as padre in West London from 1926-1933, when he was based at Mark VII, Fitzroy Square. Later he was, for more than 20 years, Director of Religious Education in the Diocese of Canterbury. He was aged 89.

Betty Webster, of Sandown/Shanklin Joint Branch on the Isle of Wight died in February. She had been a member for 16 years. Although a kidney patient, on dialysis for nearly 10 years, she took a full part in the life of the branch and held the offices of treasurer and secretary. She bore her long illness with great fortitude and will be sadly missed.

LB

Edna ('Billie') Bainton, who died in February, joined Toc H in 1926 and met her husband, Leslie, through Toc H. She was at various times area, district and branch pilot, a central councillor, an honorary staff member and a member of CEC. She had a wide circle of friends in Toc H, both here and abroad, with whom she kept in contact. We remember her with affection. Many will mourn the passing of this generous, kindhearted, dedicated member, for whom Toc H was a life-long commitment.

GM

Clarrie Darwent died on March 8, aged 89. He originally joined Toc H in Birmingham, moving to the Isle of Wight some 20 years ago. At various times he served as Chairman and Pilot of Sandown/Shanklin Branch. He had been a keen cyclist and was a Lay Reader for many years.

LB

Alison House Holiday Weeks

28 July - 4 August

Painting Week. This week is for beginners and non-artists as well as experienced painters. Tutor - Harry Muscott.

11 - 18 August

Holiday Week led by Marjorie Berry.

Both the above weeks from £115 inclusive. Apply to:

The Warden,

Toc H Alison House,
 Intake Lane, Cromford, Matlock,
 Derbyshire DE4 3RH.

Tel: 0629 82 2316

congratulations

to Eleanor and George Wakefield, leading lights of Toc H in Sheffield for many years, who celebrate their Golden Wedding this month.

Don Davis joined the numbers of the Elder Brethren on March 8. He had suffered ill health for some six months with great patience. We remember him for his embodiment of the spirit of Toc H. He was convinced that branch life was the real centre of the movement and he laboured unceasingly for the welfare of the Gloucester branch, of which he had been a member for 33 years. His great work was the conception and carrying through of the 'Raid the larder' scheme. This involved a listing of the aged and needy people of the city, followed by a house-to-house collection of foodstuffs, its packaging into parcels and its delivery from house to house. To see good put into action was the expression of his faith and the weekly observance of Light and Homegoing Prayers was its refreshment.

HP

It was from Toc H that Sidney Arnold, who died in March aged 90, drew the inspiration for all his varied work for the community. He served as a prison visitor for over 20 years and was active in setting up the Citizen's Advice Bureau. He did a stint as chairman of the Toc H West Yorkshire Area Executive and as a member of the Central Executive. As the Minister said in his funeral address: 'It seems right to remember today all that he's been and all that he's done, but in the end the real treasured memories are of the man himself; and he was simply a lovely person. He was kind, he was thoughtful, he cared about people, he was grateful for people's kindness, he enjoyed company.'

Edie Wilson, who died in March, was well known locally as the first person in Margate to ride a motor bike. She joined Toc H in 1955. She was treasurer of Margate women's branch for 11 years and, as a Cub Scout leader, maintained the link between the branch and the Scout movement.

IW

Broadway, Worcs, Branch has been saddened by the death of Fred Pendrey, its senior member, senior both by age and by years of service to the movement. He joined in November 1935 and was a regular and enthusiastic attender at meetings and participant in activities. His kind and cheerful disposition endeared him to all and he will be remembered with great pride and thankfulness.

JJ

We give thanks for their lives

VISIT HEAD-QUARTERS! Open Day

Wednesday 18 July

Headquarters will be open to all members and friends all day on 18 July. Bring a packed lunch and come and see your Headquarters at work. We will be delighted to see you.

Garden Party

Saturday 1 September

2.00 - 5.00 pm

Garden Party with sideshows, teas, bouncy castle, model railway, lacemakers, dancing school display, treasure hunt.

Come and enjoy an afternoon of fun in the gardens at Headquarters.

6.30 - 9.00 pm

Cheese and Wine Evening with musical entertainment at £1.50 per head. Tickets available in advance from:

Barbara Martin,
 Toc H Headquarters,
 1 Forest Close, Wendover,
 Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT

sma ads

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) five weeks before publication day, which is the 23rd of the preceding month. The charge is 10p a word (minimum £1) plus VAT, to Point 3 Magazine. Rates of display advertisements can be obtained from the Editorial Office, Toc H Headquarters, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT.

Raise funds quickly, easily. Superb ball-pens, combs, key fobs, diaries, etc. gold stamped to your requirements. Details: Northern Novelties, Bradford BD3 8BT.

Hythe, Kent - homely accommodation in member's home. Bed/breakfast and/or evening meal or full board, very reasonable rates. Enquire Nesta Cock, 7 Tourney Close, Lympne, Hythe, Kent CT21 4LL. Tel: 0303 269407.

NOTELETS of your church make popular fund raisers. Details from: Norheimsund Books and Cards, 1 Whitney Road, Burton Latimer, Kettering, Northants NN15 5SL.

OUT OF A HOP LOFT

Seventy-five years of TOC H

JUDITH RICE KENNETH PRIDEAUX-BRUNE

In 1915, Philip Clayton, an army chaplain, founded a soldiers' rest-house behind Allied lines in Belgium. Talbot House (Toc H in the signallers' jargon of the time) was a unique source of friendship and peace for the soldiers. At the top of the building was an old hop loft which had been converted into a chapel, and while people befriended each other regardless of status, many also discovered a reality in religion for the first time.

Out of that house grew the Toc H movement, which for 75 years has been encouraging people to explore what it is that gives meaning to their lives through relationships with others. *Out of a Hop Loft* charts its history by sharing with us the fascinating personal journeys made by some of the people whose lives have been profoundly affected by the organisation over the years.

Toc H's basic message, which comes across forcefully in this book, is that friendships between people of different generations, classes and cultures have a transforming power that reaches far beyond the individuals themselves. This is the essence of Toc H - and it all came 'out of a hop loft'.

Published June 18th 1990

£6.95

Darton, Longman & Todd

To: Toc H Publications, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6BT

Please send me copy/copies of
Out of a Hop Loft @ £6.95 each

P & P 75p each

TOTAL

Name _____

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